

Lepanthes auriculata Luer, sp. nov.

Planta grandis caespitosa, inflorescentia folio elliptico longi-acuminato brevior, racemo densifloro longi-pedunculato, sepalis glabris acuminatis, petalis transverse bicuneatis, labelli lamina ellipticis auriculatis, corpore protrudenti, appendice oblonga pubescenti.

Plant large, epiphytic, caespitose; roots coarse. Secondary stems erect, slender, 20-30 cm tall, enclosed by 12-16 minutely ciliate lepanthiform sheaths. Leaf erect, thinly coriaceous, elliptical, acute, long-acuminate, 11-13 cm long, 4.5-5 cm wide, minutely ciliate along the veins beneath, the rounded base contracted into a petiole 5 mm long. Inflorescence a dense, successively flowered raceme at least to 5 mm long, borne by a filiform peduncle up to 40 mm long behind the leaf; floral bract 1.5 mm long; pedicel 1.25 mm long; ovary 4 mm long, narrowly winged; sepals yellow, glabrous, the dorsal sepal triangular, acute, acuminate, 9 mm long, 4 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 1.5 mm, the lateral sepals ovate, oblique, 9 mm long, 4 mm wide, connate 3 mm, the apices acute, acuminate, diverging; petals yellow, suffused with purple, transversely bilobed, 1.25 mm long, 5 mm wide, the upper lobe cuneate with the apex subtruncate-rounded, the lower lobe similar but smaller and narrower; lip yellow, edged in purple, the blades elliptical, longitudinally concave, 2 mm long, the apex narrowly rounded, the base rounded, the connectives broad, short, oblique, connate to the midpart of the under surface of the column, the body protruding and rounded, the appendix short, oblong, pubescent; column 2 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

Etymology: From the Latin *auriculatus*, "shaped like an ear," in reference to the appearance of the blades of the lip.

Type: *ECUADOR*: ZAMORA-CHINCHIPE: epiphytic near the river above Valladolid, alt. ca. 1800 m, 21 Feb. 1983, *D. D'Alessandro 164* (Holotype: SEL), C. Luer illustr. 9076.

This large species may be distinguished from its numerous relatives by the large, long-acuminate leaves; the glabrous, acuminate sepals; the cuneate, bilobed petals; the auriculate lobes of the lip, and a protruding appendix. The last feature, however, is visible only when the column is lifted from between the lobes of the lip.